

## Kennedy, John F.

John Fitzgerald Kennedy, the 35th president of the United States (1961-63), was, at the age of 43, the youngest man and the first Roman Catholic ever elected to the presidency. Rich, handsome, elegant, and articulate, he aroused great admiration at home and abroad. His assassination in Dallas, Tex., in November 1963 provoked outrage and widespread mourning. His term of office as president was too short, however, to permit safe judgments about his place in history.

### Early Life

Kennedy was born in Brookline, Mass., on May 29, 1917, a descendant of Irish Catholics who had immigrated to America in the 19th century. His father, Joseph P. Kennedy, was a combative businessman who became a multimillionaire, head of the Securities and Exchange Commission, and ambassador to Great Britain. He and his wife, Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy, had the highest ambitions for their nine children, of whom John was the second son (see KENNEDY family).

Kennedy graduated from Choate School in Wallingford, Conn., briefly attended Princeton University, and then entered Harvard University in 1936. At Harvard he wrote an honors thesis on British foreign policies in the 1930s; it was published in 1940, the year he graduated, under the title *Why England Slept*. In 1941, shortly before the United States entered World War II, Kennedy joined the U.S. Navy. While on active duty in the Pacific in 1943, the boat he commanded—PT 109—was sunk by the Japanese. Kennedy performed heroically in rescuing his crew, but he aggravated an old back injury and contracted malaria. He was discharged in early 1945.

### Congressman and Senator

In 1946, Kennedy ran successfully for a Boston-based seat in the U.S. House of Representatives; he was reelected in 1948 and 1950. As a congressman he backed social legislation that benefited his working-class constituents. Although generally supporting the foreign policies of President Harry S. TRUMAN, he criticized what he considered the administration's weak stand against the Communist Chinese. Kennedy continued to advocate a strong, anti-Communist foreign policy throughout his career. Restless in the House, Kennedy challenged incumbent Republican senator Henry Cabot LODGE, Jr., in 1952. Although the Republican presidential candidate, Dwight D. EISENHOWER, won in Massachusetts as well as the country as a whole, Kennedy showed his remarkable vote-getting appeal by defeating Lodge.

A year later, on Sept. 12, 1953, Kennedy married Jacqueline Bouvier (see ONASSIS, JACQUELINE BOUVIER KENNEDY). The couple had three children: Caroline Bouvier (b. Nov. 27, 1957), John Fitzgerald, Jr. (b. Nov. 25, 1960), and a second son who died in infancy in August 1963.

Kennedy was a relatively ineffectual senator. During parts of 1954 and 1955 he was seriously ill with back ailments and was therefore unable to play an important role in government. Critics observed that he made no effort to oppose the anti-civil libertarian excesses of Sen. Joseph R. MCCARTHY of Wisconsin. His friends later argued, not entirely persuasively, that he would have voted to censure McCarthy if he had not been hospitalized at the time. During his illness Kennedy worked on a book of biographical studies of American political heroes. Published in 1956 under the title *Profiles in Courage*, it won a Pulitzer Prize for biography in 1957. Like his earlier book on British foreign policy, it revealed his admiration for forceful political figures. This faith in activism was to become a hallmark of his presidency.

In 1956, Kennedy bid unsuccessfully for the Democratic vice-presidential nomination. Thereafter, he set his sights on the presidency, especially after his reelection to the Senate in 1958. He continued during these years to support a firmly anti-Communist foreign policy. A cautious liberal on domestic issues, he backed a compromise civil rights bill in 1957 and devoted special efforts to labor legislation.

By 1960, Kennedy was but one of many Democratic aspirants for the party's presidential nomination. He put together, however, a well-financed, highly organized campaign and won on the first ballot. As a northerner and a Roman Catholic, he recognized his lack of strength in the South and shrewdly chose Sen. Lyndon Baines JOHNSON of Texas as his running mate. Kennedy also performed well in a series of unprecedented television debates with his Republican opponent, Vice-President Richard M. NIXON. Kennedy promised tougher defense policies and progressive health, housing, and civil rights programs. His New Frontier, he pledged, would bring the nation out of its economic slump.



## Presidency

Kennedy won the election, but by a narrow margin. He lacked reliable majorities in Congress. Primarily for these reasons, most of his domestic policies stalled on Capitol Hill. When advocates of racial justice picked up strength in 1962-63, he moved belatedly to promote civil rights legislation (see CIVIL RIGHTS ACTS). He also sought a tax cut to stimulate the economy. At the time of his assassination, however, these and other programs such as federal aid to education and MEDICARE remained tied up in Congress. It was left to his successor, President Johnson, to push this legislation through the more compliant congresses of 1964 and 1965.

Kennedy's eloquent inaugural address—in which he exhorted the nation: "Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country"—sounded cold war themes. Soon thereafter, the president acted on his anti-Communism by lending American military assistance to the BAY OF PIGS INVASION of Cuba in April 1961. The amphibious assault had been planned by the Central Intelligence Agency under the Eisenhower administration. The actual invasion was Kennedy's decision, however, and he properly took the blame for its total failure. Later in his administration he tried to diminish anti-Americanism in the Western Hemisphere by backing development projects under the ALLIANCE FOR PROGRESS, but the small sums involved had little impact. The Peace Corps program was developed with similar goals in mind (see ACTION).

Kennedy's chief adversary abroad was the Soviet leader Nikita KHRUSHCHEV. As early as June 1961 the two men talked in Vienna, but the meeting served only to harden Soviet-American hostility. Khrushchev then threatened to sign a treaty with East Germany that would have given the East Germans control over western access routes to Berlin. Kennedy held firm, and no such treaty was signed. The Soviets responded, however, by erecting a wall between East and West Berlin. Kennedy used the crisis to request from Congress, and to receive, greatly increased appropriations for defense.

By far the tensest overseas confrontation of the Kennedy years occurred with the CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS. In October 1962, U.S. intelligence discovered that the Russians were constructing offensive missile sites in Cuba. Kennedy recognized that such missiles would add little to Russian military potential, but he regarded the Soviet move as deliberately provocative. Resolving to show his mettle, he ordered a naval and air quarantine on shipments of offensive weapons to Cuba. At first armed conflict seemed likely. But the Soviets pulled back and promised not to set up the missiles; the United States then said it would not attack Cuba.

As if chastened by this crisis, the most frightening of the cold war, the Soviets and Americans in 1963 signed a treaty barring atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons. Kennedy nevertheless remained as ready as before to stop Communist advances. He continued to bolster American defenses and stepped up military aid to South Vietnam, where revolutionary forces were increasingly active. By November 1963, the United States had sent some 16,000 military personnel to Vietnam. His administration also intervened in South Vietnamese politics by at least conniving at the overthrow of NGO DINH DIEM in November 1963.

## Assassination

By this time Kennedy was thinking ahead to the presidential campaign of 1964. In order to promote harmony between warring factions of the Democratic party in Texas, he traveled there in November 1963. While driving in a motorcade through Dallas on November 22, he was shot in the head and died within an hour.

President Johnson appointed the WARREN COMMISSION to investigate the assassination. It concluded that the killer, acting alone, was 24-year-old Lee Harvey OSWALD. No motive was established. Speculation persisted over the years, however, that Kennedy was the victim of a conspiracy.

## James T. Patterson

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These three projects were developed with similar goals in mind, and were carried out by the same group of people. The first project was the development of a system for the automatic processing of intelligence information. This system was designed to handle the large volume of information that was being received from various sources, and to provide a means for the rapid analysis and dissemination of this information. The second project was the development of a system for the automatic processing of intelligence information. This system was designed to handle the large volume of information that was being received from various sources, and to provide a means for the rapid analysis and dissemination of this information. The third project was the development of a system for the automatic processing of intelligence information. This system was designed to handle the large volume of information that was being received from various sources, and to provide a means for the rapid analysis and dissemination of this information.

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On August 1981, the following information was received from the Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. (20540-0000):

The Bureau of the Census is currently conducting a study of the economic status of the elderly population in the United States. The study is being conducted by the Social Security Administration, Office of Research and Statistics, Washington, D.C. (20540-0000). The study is being conducted in order to determine the economic status of the elderly population in the United States. The study is being conducted in order to determine the economic status of the elderly population in the United States.

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1. The following information is being furnished to you for your information only. It is not intended to be used for any other purpose.

1. The first part of the document is a letter from the President of the United States to the Congress, dated January 1, 1861. It is a copy of the original letter, and is signed by Abraham Lincoln.

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Khrushchev, Nikita Sergeyevich

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Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev was first secretary of the Soviet Communist party from 1953 to 1964 and effective leader of the USSR from 1956 (premier from 1958) to 1964. He was born on Apr. 17 (N.S.), 1894, in a mud hut in the village of Kalinovka, Kursk province. As a young boy, Khrushchev worked long hours in the coal mines. According to his memoirs, he had a strict religious upbringing, becoming a revolutionary under the influence of one of his teachers. In 1918 he joined the Bolshevik party and fought in the Civil War. Afterward, he was sent by the party to a technical institute.

Khrushchev rose steadily up the party ladder, always combining his talents as an administrator with his technical training. After assignments in the Ukraine, he became head of the Moscow regional party committee, and in 1934 he became a member of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist party. In these positions he directed the construction of the Moscow subway.

Although increasingly influential, Khrushchev was never an intimate associate of Joseph STALIN; he concentrated on technical rather than political accomplishment. Perhaps for that reason he escaped the Great Purge of the 1930s. In 1938 he returned to the Ukraine as first secretary of the Ukrainian Communist party and focused his attention primarily on agriculture, in which he gained a reputation as an expert. After World War II he was brought again to Moscow, where he served in the Secretariat and the Politburo and was again head of the Moscow regional committee. It was those positions, and his reputation as an agricultural expert, that soon propelled him to power.

#### Khrushchev in the Post-Stalin Era

Stalin died on Mar. 5, 1953, and the resulting power vacuum was filled by a "collective leadership," consisting primarily of Khrushchev, Lavrenti BERIA, Nikoli BULGANIN, Georg MALENKOV, Vyacheslav MOLOTOV, and Lazar Kaganovich. Malenkov was named premier and Khrushchev first secretary of the Communist party. The collective leadership was not long in existence. Beria was forced out of the party in July 1953 (and later executed). In 1955, Malenkov was replaced as premier by Bulganin, who was nominated to the post by Khrushchev. By 1956, Khrushchev was paramount in the party. At the 20th party congress that year, he gave his famous six-hour "secret speech" denouncing the "crimes of the Stalin era." Many old-time party leaders felt that Khrushchev had gone too far; but, despite two attempts on his life later that year, he continued to consolidate his power. In 1957, Malenkov, Molotov, and Kaganovich were purged from the party after an abortive attempt to oust Khrushchev from leadership. In 1958, Bulganin resigned, and Khrushchev became premier as well as party secretary.

#### Khrushchev's Domestic Policies

Khrushchev set bold new economic goals for "overtaking the West" and the United States in particular. In 1954, under his supervision, vast new virgin lands were opened to cultivation, and the result was a dramatic increase in food production. Two outstanding harvests (1956, 1958) enabled him to push ahead with rapid industrial development, especially in the production of consumer goods. He also introduced a series of important administrative reforms. In 1957 he set up a new system of regional economic councils (Sovnarkhozy) and invited debate and discussion on various economic, educational, and legal reforms. He also relaxed censorship somewhat, allowing some dissident intellectuals, like Aleksandr SOLZHENITSYN, to publish previously suppressed works. In 1962 he attempted to reorganize the entire party apparatus on the basis of the "production principle," dividing local committees into separate agricultural and industrial sections. Problems soon developed, however. The good harvest years were followed by bad ones, his administrative changes led to much confusion, and his policy of more open discussion provoked new opposition. Dissidence grew along with popular frustration, as expectations outstripped accomplishments.

#### Foreign Affairs

Energy, ebullience, and lofty goals also characterized Khrushchev's foreign policy. After a dramatic reconciliation with President TITO of Yugoslavia in 1955, he met with Western leaders at a Geneva summit conference in 1955. He also traveled to the United States (in 1959 and 1960), the first Soviet leader to do so. These activities did much to thaw the COLD WAR and to build commercial and cultural ties between East and West.

Despite Khrushchev's more relaxed relations with the West, he maintained strong Soviet control over the Communist nations of Eastern Europe. This fact was emphasized by his brutal suppression in 1956 of the



**HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION.** The WARSAW TREATY ORGANIZATION, which binds the Eastern bloc militarily to Moscow, was a creation of the Khrushchev era. Meanwhile, his insistence on "peaceful coexistence" with the capitalist West and his generally unorthodox interpretation of classic Marxist doctrine contributed to a rupture with the Communist government of China. Cuba represented both a triumph and a failure of Khrushchev's foreign policy. The triumph lay in Cuba's alignment, under Fidel CASTRO, with the USSR, giving the latter its first ally in the Western Hemisphere. The failure resulted from the CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS (1962), when Khrushchev, with a great loss of face, was forced to remove Soviet missiles from the island.

#### **Khrushchev's Decline**

Khrushchev's unorthodox policies and his colorful behavior had created opposition from the beginning, especially among the old guard party members. His early successes tended to neutralize that faction, but as his failures began to mount, both domestically and internationally, his opponents in the Politburo gained strength. Finally, in October 1964, he was forced out of office. His remaining years were spent in quiet retirement in the outskirts of Moscow. The vast changes he had unleashed in the USSR could not be undone, however, and his years in power had a lasting effect on his homeland. He died on Sept. 11, 1971.

#### **William G. Rosenberg**

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